

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A filter assembly comprising:
a filter housing including at least a fluid inlet and a filtrate outlet and defining a fluid flow path between the fluid inlet and the filtrate outlet, wherein the filter housing further includes a removable portion and a cylindrical ~~support having one or more openings~~cage having perforations through the cage;
a cylindrical, hollow filter cartridge removably positioned in the housing in the fluid flow path, the filter cartridge being positioned within and closely adjacent to the cylindrical ~~support and cage~~cage facing the ~~one or more openings~~perforations; and
a linkage ~~engagable between~~which includes link elements on the filter cartridge and the removable portion of the filter housing and arranged to engage and to rotate and/or axially move the filter cartridge with respect to the cylindrical support cage in response to removal of the removable portion of the filter housing, the engaged link elements exerting a twisting force between the filter cartridge and the cage.
2. (Original) The filter assembly of claim 1 wherein the removable portion of the filter housing comprises a rotatable portion of the filter housing.
3. (Original) The filter assembly of claim 2 wherein the filter housing includes a remaining portion and the rotatable portion is threaded to the remaining portion of the filter housing.
4. (Currently Amended) The filter assembly of claim 1 wherein the ~~cylindrical support comprises a hollow cage and the openings comprise perforations through the cage and wherein the filter cartridge is positioned within the perforated cage~~removable portion of filter housing includes a header assembly.
5. (Currently Amended) The filter assembly of claim ~~4~~1 wherein the filter housing includes a remaining portion mounted to the removable portion of the filter housing and wherein the perforated cage is mounted to the remaining portion of the filter housing.
6. (Currently Amended) The filter assembly of claim 1 wherein the ~~cylindrical support comprises a hollow core and the openings comprise perforations through the core and wherein the perforated core is positioned within the hollow filter cartridge~~filter cartridge is free of a perforated core.

7. (Currently Amended) The filter assembly of claim ~~6~~1 wherein the filter housing further includes a remaining portion mounted to the removable portion of the filter housing and wherein the perforated core is mounted to the remaining portion of the filter housing arranged to fit within the interior of the hollow filter cartridge.

8.-10. (Canceled)

11. (Currently Amended) The filter assembly of claim 1 wherein ~~the linkage comprises one or more link elements~~ are operatively associated with the removable portion of the filter housing and one or more link elements are operatively associated with the filter cartridge, the link elements of the filter cartridge being engagable with the link elements of the removable portion of the filter housing.

12. (Currently Amended) The filter assembly of claim ~~11~~1 wherein the ~~one or more~~ link elements of the filter cartridge comprise a protrusion on the filter cartridge.

13. (Currently Amended) The filter assembly of claim ~~11~~1 wherein the ~~one or more~~ link elements of the filter cartridge comprise an indentation in the filter cartridge.

14. (Currently Amended) The filter assembly of claim ~~11~~1 wherein the filter cartridge has an axially facing end and the link element is positioned at the end of the filter cartridge.

15. (Currently Amended) The filter assembly of claim ~~11~~1 wherein the filter cartridge has a radially facing side and the link element is positioned at the side of the filter cartridge.

16. (Original) The filter assembly of claim 15 wherein the side comprises the outside of the hollow filter cartridge.

17. (Currently Amended) The filter assembly of claim ~~11~~1 wherein the ~~link elements are configured to transmit a twisting force from the removable portion of the filter housing to the filter cartridge~~ includes a filter pack comprising one or more polymeric materials.

18. (Currently Amended) The filter assembly of claim ~~11~~1 wherein the link elements are configured to transmit an axial force ~~from the removable portion of the filter housing to~~between the filter cartridge and the cage.

19. (Currently Amended) The filter assembly of claim ~~11~~1 wherein at least one of the link elements comprises a protrusion having a hook-shaped configuration.

20. (Currently Amended) A filter cartridge for a filter housing including a cylindrical ~~support cage~~having one or more openings-perforations and a removable portion ~~having further including~~one or more link elements, the filter cartridge comprising a cylindrical, hollow filter pack configured to fit closely adjacent to the cylindrical ~~support cage~~facing the openings-in-the-support-perforations, the filter pack having first and second ends, and first and second end caps mounted to the first and second ends of the filter pack, at least one of the first and second end caps including one or more link elements configured to engage the one or more link elements on ~~the removable portion of the filter housing to remove and exert a twisting force on the filter cartridge from within the cylindrical support-perforated cage to break the filter cartridge free of the perforated cage~~.

21.-23. (Canceled).

24. (Currently Amended) A filter cartridge removably mountable within a perforated cage connected to a filter housing, the filter cartridge comprising:
a cylindrical, hollow, substantially polymeric filter pack having first and second ends; and
first and second end caps mounted to the first and second ends of the filter pack, at least one of the end caps including one or more link elements configured to transmit a twisting force ~~and/or an axial force~~to the end cap and the filter pack;
wherein the filter cartridge is free of ~~at least one of a perforated core and a perforated cage~~.

25.-27. (Canceled).

28. (Previously Presented) The filter cartridge of claim 20 wherein the link element comprises a protrusion extending from the end cap.

29. (Previously Presented) The filter cartridge of claim 24 wherein the link element comprises a protrusion extending from the end cap.

30. (Previously Presented) The filter cartridge of claim 20 wherein the link element comprises an indentation in the end cap.

31. (Previously Presented) The filter cartridge of claim 24 wherein the link element comprises an indentation in the end cap.

32. (Previously Presented) The filter cartridge of claim 20 wherein the link element comprises a first link element and the end cap further includes a second link element angularly spaced from the first link element.

33. (Previously Presented) The filter cartridge of claim 24 wherein the link element comprises a first link element and the end cap further includes a second link element angularly spaced from the first link element.

34. (Canceled).

35. (Currently Amended) A method for removing a filter cartridge from a filter housing comprising ~~removing a removable portion of the filter housing which is linked to a cylindrical filter cartridge, including rotating and/or axially moving the filter cartridge closely adjacent to a stationary cylindrical support having one or more openings facing the filter cartridge, and removing the filter cartridge from the stationary support and the filter housing;~~

removing a removable portion of the filter housing from a remaining portion of the filter housing, including rotating the removable portion;

engaging one or more link elements on the filter housing and one or more link elements on the filter cartridge in response to rotating the removable portion of the filter housing, wherein engaging the link elements includes exerting a twisting force between a perforated cage attached to the filter housing and the filter cartridge positioned within and closely adjacent to the perforated cage to break the filter cartridge free of the perforated cage;
and

removing the filter cartridge from the filter housing.

36. and 37. (Canceled).

38. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 35 wherein removing the filter cartridge includes axially sliding the filter cartridge along the ~~stationary support~~
perforated cage.

39. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 35 wherein ~~removing the removable portion of the filter housing includes engaging one or more the link elements on the removable portion of the filter housing with one or more link elements on the filter cartridge and transmitting a twisting force and/or an axial force from the removable portion of the filter housing to the filter cartridge through the engaged link elements~~further includes exerting an axial force between the perforated cage and the filter cartridge within the perforated cage.

40. and 41. (Canceled).

42. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 35 wherein removing the removable portion of the filter housing includes unscrewing the removable portion of the filter housing from the remainder of the filter housing.